

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Challenge Grants FY 2004

Notice of Funds Availability

CFDA No. 94.007

Deadline for Application: June 8, 2004, 5:00 P.M. EDT

Award Announcement: August 2004

Overview Information

Available Grants: The Corporation for National and Community Service (hereinafter "the Corporation") announces the availability of approximately \$2,600,000 in fiscal year 2004 funds for eligible nonprofit organizations for Challenge Grants. The funds are available for these Challenge Grants under Public Law 108-199, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2004. The Corporation anticipates making up to four Challenge Grants under this announcement, with the minimum grant level of up to \$500,000 and the maximum grant level of \$1,000,000. Applicants must provide at least two dollars in private funding for every federal dollar. Matching funds must be cash and grantees must raise the matching funds within a year. The Corporation will make awards covering a period not to exceed one year.

Purpose of Program: The purpose of these challenge grants is to assist nonprofit organizations in securing previously untapped sources of private funds to build sustainable service and volunteer programs. Organizations receiving funds under this notice must either greatly expand services by engaging citizens in meeting community needs or offer new services through expanded citizen engagement.

Eligible Applicants: Because the Corporation wants to ensure that all eligible organizations are able to compete on an equal basis for federal financial assistance, the Corporation encourages all eligible non-profit organizations, including those that have not applied for federal assistance from the Corporation in the past, as well as all interested faith-based and secular community organizations, intermediary organizations, associations of volunteer centers, Indian tribal organizations and community foundations to apply. Unless the Corporation approves otherwise, all applicants must apply through its eGrants electronic system.

Dates: The deadline for applications is 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on June 8, 2004. However, if for some legitimate reason, as determined by the Corporation, it is necessary for you to submit a paper application, we must receive it by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on June 8, 2004. We anticipate announcing selections under this Notice no later than August 15, 2004. The Corporation reserves the right to permit the filing of late applications upon a finding of good cause.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information, contact: Thea Kachoris-Flores at tkachoris@cns.gov or 202-606-5000, ext. 420. The TDD number is 202-565-2799. Upon request, this information will be made available in alternate formats for people with disabilities.

FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

1. Background

The Corporation is a federal government corporation that encourages Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in community-based service to meet the nation's educational, public safety, environmental, homeland security, and other human needs. In doing so, the Corporation fosters civic responsibility, strengthens the ties that bind us together as a people, and provides educational opportunity for those who make a substantial commitment to service. This year, the Corporation will help support more than two million Americans who perform substantial service in communities across the country. Together with USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation is working to build a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility in America.

In 2002, President George W. Bush called upon every American to get involved in strengthening America's communities and sharing America's compassion around the world. The President asked each American to commit at least two years of their lives—the equivalent of 4,000 hours—to the service of others. The funds provided under this grant announcement are meant to help organizations enhance their capacity to enable Americans to respond to this call.

2. Purpose

The grants made under this announcement will assist nonprofit organizations that secure previously untapped sources of private funds to build sustainable service and volunteer programs in the United States. Applicants must demonstrate how they will either greatly expand or initiate new services to meet community needs through this grant, and how the funds will result in significantly more citizens engaged in service and volunteer activities in their communities.

A commitment to service and volunteerism builds on our Nation's long and honorable commitment to assisting individuals, families, and communities who either have not fully shared in America's prosperity or have short-term needs created by changes in life circumstances. Paired with a process of civic reflection, service and volunteerism also reconnect those who serve or volunteer with basic American ideals such as freedom, liberty, and respect for diversity; help to bridge ethnic, racial, religious, and economic divides; and strengthen our understanding of the responsibilities of American citizenship.

Supporting these fundamental American principles requires the involvement of all sectors, including private organizations and individuals. Toward that end, the challenge grant program is intended to spur additional private support that will lead to sustainable service and volunteer activities that meet community needs. The Corporation defines sustainable service and volunteer activities as those that will continue beyond the period of the challenge grant. We encourage applications from organizations not currently receiving Corporation funding as well as

from those organizations that are now receiving funds under the programs of the Corporation, including AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps.

3. Program Authority

The funds are available for these challenge grants under Public Law 108-199, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2004.

4. Applicable Regulations

Applicable regulations include uniform administrative requirements for grants and agreements with institutions of higher education, hospitals, and other nonprofit organizations, 45 CFR 2543.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

The Corporation anticipates making up to four challenge grants under this announcement, with the minimum grant level of up to \$500,000 and the maximum grant level of \$1,000,000. Applicants must provide at least two dollars in private funding for every federal dollar. Matching funds must be cash and grantees must raise the matching funds within a year. Organizations receiving funds under this notice must either greatly expand services by engaging citizens in meeting community needs or offer new services through expanded citizen engagement.

Program Period of Performance

The Corporation will make awards covering a period not to exceed one year. The Corporation will award the entire amount of the grant at the outset. In addition, access to awarded grant funds will be contingent on a grantee's having secured matching funds. Applications must include a proposed budget and proposed activities for the proposed period. The Corporation is uncertain as to whether additional funds will be made available for challenge grants in subsequent years, and has no obligation to provide additional funding beyond the period of the grant.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for this funding are nonprofit organizations. Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(4) which engages in lobbying activities, is not eligible. Organizations that are previous recipients of Challenge Grants are not eligible to apply.

Given the purpose of challenge grants, applicants must have experience in promoting and/or administering opportunities for Americans to engage in service and volunteering in their communities. Applicants must be well-established organizations with a successful track record of raising funds from private organizations or individuals. Applicants must propose a program with a state-wide, regional (2 or more contiguous states), or national (2 or more non-contiguous states) focus. Applicants must also have completed an evaluation of either their organization or the program proposed for funding through the challenge grant within the last four years. The evaluation must indicate positive outcomes related to purposes described above for challenge grants. An applicant should summarize the results of the evaluation in its proposal, and submit the entire evaluation by the application deadline, under separate cover to the address noted earlier (see **ADDRESSES**).

Applicants may include pass-through organizations or intermediary organizations. For example, a pass-through or intermediary organization may raise funds from the private sector and distribute those monies to smaller community-based organizations, including faith-based organizations, in support of specific service and volunteer activities. For this purpose, pass-through or intermediary organizations may include, but are not limited to, community foundations.

In authorizing this program, the Congress intends that eligible applicants specifically include: (a) nonprofit organizations currently operating an AmeriCorps program; (b) nonprofit organizations that promote service and volunteer opportunities similar to AmeriCorps but do not use AmeriCorps members; and (c) nonprofit organizations that are not themselves direct service providers but provide support to such organizations.

Applicants currently operating programs with Corporation funds, or applying for other Corporation funding, must differentiate between the proposed objectives and activities under the challenge grant and those of its currently funded program or pending application. An applicant must also identify any other grant received from the Corporation since 1994, including the program under which the grant was provided.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

A challenge grant has characteristics and matching fund provisions that are distinct from other grant programs sponsored by the Corporation. Under challenge grants, the Corporation's funds must serve as an incentive for nonprofit organizations to raise additional funds from the private sector to build sustainable service and volunteer programs that will meet community needs. In addition:

- a. Applicants must provide at least two dollars in private funding for every federal dollar. Matching funds must be cash. Applicants may count earned income through fee for service activities up to an approved percentage, to be determined during the grant negotiation.
- b. The matching funds must be expended on the successful applicant's service and volunteer programs.
- c. Applicants must demonstrate that federal funds are generating additional private

- sector funding.
- d. In order to draw down federal funds, successful applicants will have to demonstrate written commitments from donors to provide private funds. The only exception is, that upon approval by the Corporation, limited funds for start-up costs may be available upon grant award approval.
 - e. Applicants must provide a well-thought-out plan, including timetable for raising the private funds, and identify the individuals (e.g., staff, consultants, board of directors) responsible for this activity.
 - f. Applicants must demonstrate previous success in having raised funds from the private sector. Applicants must also demonstrate the capacity to expand services greatly, or initiate new programs, through more individuals engaged in service or volunteerism.
 - g. Applicants should identify why a challenge grant from the Corporation is a critical source for helping to raise private sector funds.
 - h. The Corporation will make awards covering a period not to exceed one year. Applicants should understand that the Corporation anticipates challenge grants will meet one-time needs related to significant expansion or program start-up, and does not intend for these grants to provide operational support. Therefore, applicants should not anticipate receiving long-term operational support through the challenge grant program.
 - i. Applicants must explain how their proposed activities will complement programs overseen by the state commission(s) on service in the state(s) in which they propose to operate.
 - j. Applicants must demonstrate how the grant will result in sustainable activities after the grant period ends.

3. Other

Challenge grants may be used for activities that will build sustainable service and volunteer programs in nonprofit organizations in the United States that address needs in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, homeland security, and health and other human needs. Examples of activities that may be supported with the grant include:

- a. Volunteer recruitment, training, and supervision activities;
- b. Expansion of current service programs to new markets or new audiences;
- c. Assistance to affiliated networks in developing volunteer programs;
- d. Activities related to serving as a pass-through organization for smaller organizations to assist their development of sustainable service and volunteer activities;
- e. Providing training on volunteer management to audiences who have not previously had access to such training;
- f. Supporting new or expanded fee for service activities which increase volunteer capacity.
- g. Research related to specific efforts to build sustainable service and volunteer programs in a nonprofit organization;
- h. Scholarship programs related to promoting service;

- i. Support for organizations that engage citizens and communities in supporting schools in the education of children;
- j. Citizenship training that will be integrated into the service experience; and
- k. Programs that train and place education and health professionals in high need areas that have difficulty recruiting.

The above are only examples. The applicant must provide a clear explanation for the use of the funds, including a description of the nature of new, improved or expanded citizen service that will result, including the impact it will have on meeting community needs.

An applicant may not propose to fund the equivalent of an operational grant under AmeriCorps or any of the Corporation funded programs. Such operational grants typically include monies to support AmeriCorps members' living allowances and related costs, as well as an allocation of education awards from the National Service Trust. Challenge grants will not provide any funds for living allowance for AmeriCorps members, nor include any education awards from the National Service Trust. Applications for such operational grants must be submitted through one of the other available sources of funding. For more information concerning operational grants, see the Corporation's website at <http://www.cns.gov>.

Challenge grant funds provided by the Corporation, including matching funds, may not be used for fundraising, capital campaigns, building construction, endowments, or investments.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Addresses

Applications are to be submitted using eGrants, the Corporation's integrated, secure, web-based system for applications. You may access eGrants at <http://www.cns.gov/egrants/index.html>.

If you cannot submit an application electronically, submit a paper application, together with an electronic version of the application on a 3.5" diskette to facilitate data entry into the eGrants system, to the following address: Corporation for National and Community Service, 1201 New York Avenue, N.W., Box C.G., Washington, D.C., 20525. Due to delays in delivery of regular U.S.P.S. mail to government offices, there is no guarantee that your application will arrive in time to be considered. We therefore suggest that if you are submitting a paper application, you use U.S.P.S. priority mail or a commercial overnight delivery service to ensure that you meet the deadline. Also, submit an explanation as to why you could not submit electronically. We will not accept an application that is submitted by facsimile.

2. Application Content and Form

To be considered for funding, applications must meet all of the criteria and requirements contained in this Notice. Eligible applicants should use the application and accompanying instructions available on the Corporation's website under funding and initiatives at

<http://www.nationalservice.org/whatshot/notices.html>. For a printed copy of any of these materials, please contact Thea Kachoris-Flores at tkachoris@cns.gov or 202-606-5000, ext. 420. Applicants are urged to pay close attention to these application materials.

In addition to completing an on-line application, applicants must submit all attachments specified in the supplemental guidelines and instructions to the address listed above. This includes an evaluation of either the organization or the program proposed for funding through the challenge grant within the last four years. The evaluation must indicate positive outcomes related to the purposes described above for challenge grants. An applicant should summarize the results of the evaluation in its proposal, and submit the entire evaluation by the application deadline, under separate cover to the address noted earlier (see **ADDRESSES**).

Performance Measures

The Corporation generally requires all programs to submit at least three performance measures as part of their application. For challenge grants, we are requiring a minimum of one measure. That measure must relate to advancing sustainable service and volunteer programs. You are encouraged, but not required, to submit additional measures, as appropriate to your program, that relate to the citizen service that will be carried out with the grant. For successful applicants, following grants negotiations, the Corporation will make these performance measures a requirement of the grant. You are accountable for achieving these measures during the period of the grant.

For more information about performance measures under Corporation grants, including a toolkit to assist in the development and implementation of performance measures, visit the Corporation's website at <http://www.cns.gov>.

Volunteer Recruitment/Management

All applicants must include a plan for mobilizing non-paid volunteers, e.g., seniors, students, or members of the community of all ages and backgrounds, in the implementation of the program.

Support for Community and Faith-Based Organizations

The Corporation encourages applicants to demonstrate support for community organizations, secular and faith-based, through the challenge grant program. Applicants may identify their plans for carrying out this objective in the application.

3. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be submitted to the Corporation via eGrants by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on June 8, 2004. The Corporation strongly encourages you to register with eGrants and establish a draft application for this competition at least 3 weeks prior to the final submission deadline. Paper applications also must be received at Corporation for National and Community Service, 1201 New York Avenue, Box C.G., Washington, DC 20525 by 5:00

P.M. Eastern Daylight Time on June 8, 2004. The Corporation reserves the right to permit the filing of late applications upon a finding of good cause.

Notice of intent to apply: In order to gauge the number of applications we are likely to receive, we request that applicants send an email by May 20, 2004, to Thea Kachoris-Flores at **tkachoris@cns.gov**. The email notice of intent should state that you plan to submit an application for the challenge grant competition. Although submission of the notice of intent to apply is not mandatory, we encourage you to submit one to help the Corporation to plan more efficiently for our review. The notice should include the name of your organization, address, contact person, and phone number.

In the event you are prevented from submitting your application by the deadline because the eGrants system is unavailable, we will grant you an extension of one business day in order to transmit your application via overnight carrier (non-US Postal Service because of security–related delays in receiving mail from USPS) or by hand delivery. To be granted an extension:

- (1) You must be a registered user of eGrants, and have initiated an application for this competition; and
- (2)(a) The eGrants system must be unavailable for 60 minutes or more between the hours of 8:30am and 3:30 p.m., EDT, on the deadline date; or
- (b) The e-Application system must be unavailable for any period of time during the last hour of operation (that is, for any period of time between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m., EDT on the deadline date.

The Corporation must acknowledge and confirm these periods of unavailability before granting you an extension. To request this extension you must contact either (1) the person listed elsewhere in this notice under Other Information, VII; or (2) the eGrants help desk at 888-677-7849 or **egrantshelp@cns.gov**.

In the event of prolonged unavailability on the date of submission, the Corporation reserves the right to extend the eGrants submissions deadline. A notice will be placed in eGrants notifying all users of the extended deadline. In this case applicants would need to submit applications via eGrants by the new deadline.

4. Intergovernmental Review

These programs are not subject to Executive Order 12372.

5. Funding Restrictions

Grants under these programs are subject to the applicable Cost Principles under OMB Circulars A-21, A-122, A-87, and/or the Federal Acquisition Regulations (48 CFR Subpart 31.2).

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Selection Criteria

The Corporation will initially determine: (1) whether the organization is eligible; and (2) whether the application contains all the required information. After this initial screening, the Corporation will select and evaluate applications based on the following criteria: program design (35%); organizational capacity (50%); and budget/cost effectiveness (15%). Within organizational capacity, key factors are the organization's demonstrated ability to raise the matching funds and to carry out the greatly expanded or new service efforts. The Corporation will make all final decisions concerning awards and may require revisions to the grant proposal in order to achieve the objectives under this Notice.

2. Review and Scheduling Process

All eligible applications will be subject to a peer and staff review.

3. Anticipated Announcements and Award Dates

We anticipate announcing selections under this Notice by August 15, 2004 with award dates in September.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Award Notices.

If your application is successful, we will notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Notice of Grant Award (NGA).

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

We identify administrative and national policy requirements in this notice and in the application package and include these and other specific conditions in the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). The NGA also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

Equal Opportunity Survey

Applicants are also asked to complete the Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants. You may download this survey with the complete application and instructions (see IV.2 above for internet address) or complete the survey in eGrants while readying your application for submission.

Universal Identifier

Applications submitted for this competition must provide a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. The DUNS number is known as the universal identifier and helps the federal government improve statistical reports on federal grants and cooperative agreements. The DUNS number will not replace the Employer Identification

Number (EIN). DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or online at <http://www.dnb.com>. It may take up to 30 days to receive a DUNS number after applying. You must have this number to complete your eGrants application.

3. Reporting Requirements

Project Progress Reports and Financial Status Reports are submitted on a semi-annual basis via our on-line eGrants system. The NGA will include detailed information regarding reporting requirements.

VII. OTHER INFORMATION

For further information, contact: Thea Kachoris-Flores at tkachoris@cns.gov or 202/606-5000, ext. 420. The TDD number is 202-565-2799. This Notice, with the complete application guidelines included, is available on the Corporation's website at: <http://www.cns.gov/whatshot/notices.html>. For a printed copy of this announcement and the application guidelines, contact Ms. Kachoris-Flores. Upon request, this information will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities.

Signed

Rosie Mauk, Director
AmeriCorps State/National

May 11, 2004

Date